

ENTRANCE MONROE

DRAWER 9A-continued

WAR EPISODES

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Civil War Episodes

Fortress Monroe

Excerpts from newspapers and other sources

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THE PEACE INTERVIEW

PRESIDENT LINCOLN GOES TO FORTRESS MONROE. 2/26/65

Washington, 2d. The Star has issued an extra in regard to the movements of President Lincoln. It says today, at 11 A. M., President Lincoln left Washington by a special train for Annapolis for the purpose, it is understood, of joining Secretary Seward at Fortress Monroe to hold an interview with the rebel deputation.

Mr. Lincoln took his departure in a special car, accompanied by only one of the attaches of the White House.

From the fact of the President going to Fortress Monroe or City Point color is given to the report that the rebel deputation have been allowed to enter our lines and it is understood they are now at Fortress Monroe.

EXCURSION BY THE PRESIDENT. *Washington, 28d.* The Republican says: "President Lincoln, Mrs. Lincoln and a few invited guests left the Sixth street wharf this afternoon in the Government steam yacht River Queen, for an excursion down the river and through Chesapeake Bay. They will visit Fortress Monroe and Norfolk and go up the James river to City Point.

The excursion taken now is under advice, and mainly for the health and recreation of the President. He is thus enabled to escape the pressure made upon him every day by crowds of political vultures who throng the ante-rooms of the executive mansion from early morning until late at night. His health demands this relaxation from the cares and perplexities of public duties."

BOSTON ADV

AN EPISODE OF LINCOLN'S LIFE NEVER PUBLISHED.

Gen. Wool, who had won fame during the Mexican War, was in command of Fortress Monroe, Va. He knew how to handle his men well.

President Lincoln and his Cabinet came there the forepart of May, 1862, to confer with Gen. Wool and Commodore Goldsborough in regard to capturing the strategic place, Norfolk, Va.

The cavalry is really the eyes and ears of the Army, and many interesting things occurred. Gen. Wool's headquarters had a private garden surrounding it, bordered with a four-foot brick walk. Thirty-five or forty of his orderlies, with horses stationed outside all ready for instant action, were seated on old benches in the 12 by 20 foot room next to the general's, where Chase, Stanton, Welles, Skinner, and others were closeted.

All were anxiously awaiting orders, for we could hear a heated controversy. Suddenly the door opened and President Lincoln emerged from Gen. Wool's headquarters. Instantly all stood at attention. As our heels clicked and we saluted, the tenseness left his kindly face and it lighted up with a near smile as he emphasizingly said: "Boys, never mind that foolishness; it's only Old Abe!" and he passed on out into the garden. Our hearts were immediately captured and we agreed he could lead us anywhere, do anything with us—even use us for a carpet, if necessary.

I have always been thankful that I sat nearest the door as he passed thru; have never forgotten the thrill it gave me then.

Must Salute Officers.

A second lieutenant had been going back and forth thru the orderlies' room at short intervals, so, after our dear Commander-in-Chief had been so graciously kind, we put our heads together and the next time he came thru we did not salute our measly, insignificant second lieutenant.

In a very short time the headquarters door opened and all orderlies stood at attention hastily, respectfully, before our own commander, Gen. Wool. He held a copy of the Army Regulations, saying very gruffly, authoritatively: "Boys, you have broken the rules (and he read a certain section aloud). Don't ever let me hear of you breaking them again." My! how his black eyes did snap. I can see them yet as he drew himself up to full height—being short of stature, but broad-shouldered. He continued: "If you don't want to salute the man, the stripes on his shoulders signify he is a commissioned officer, and you must salute them." Needless to say, the second lieutenant had no occasion to pass thru our room again before our departure.

Meanwhile we watched our beloved "Abe" as he paced back and forth in the garden with such troubled expression, his hands crossed behind him at the waistline; then occasionally he removed his high black hat, fumbled amongst the valuable papers cached there until he found the specific one, and, after studying it minutely, hastily put it back, donned his hat, and continued the pacing. Oh! how our hearts bled for him, for all of us, as well as he, knew that the weight of a Nation lay on his shoulders. At last, with grim determination plainly depicted on his face, he went into headquarters.

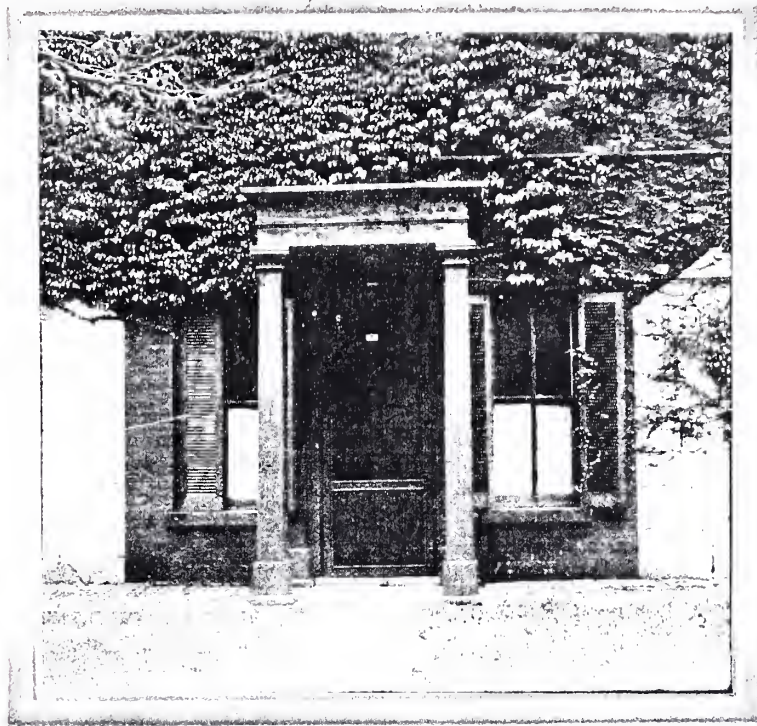
After some consultation and argument inside, the door again opened and

we orderlies were handed the dispatches to be delivered to the under officers of Commodore Goldsborough and Gen. Wool.

Soon the expedition, composed of between 14,000 and 15,000 soldiers, assembled to board ships to sail 15 miles below Fortress Monroe to Cape Henry, where the Chesapeake Bay unites with the Atlantic Ocean, and then march 14

miles to Norfolk. This was the last official act of Gen. Wool, for he was retired immediately.

I am convinced that the capture of Norfolk, May 10, should be attributed to the inspiration the officers and troops gained thru the absolute knowledge of the conditions by the conference of these notables with their supreme officer—Abraham Lincoln.



The Jefferson Davis Prison at Fortress Monroe attracts the attention of many visitors.

Crossing the bridge over the moat one enters by the main "sally-port." Turning to the right a short walk leads to "Casement No. 22," where President Jefferson Davis was a prisoner after the war. Just beyond this the "garrison flag" flies from the summit of the bastion. To make the circuit of the entire fort walking on the summit of the bastion over the moat gives a fine view of the fort and of the water beyond.

The guns of various sizes and

makes, the search lights, barracks, canteen, library, war museum, are all worthy of inspection and study.

Fortress Monroe bears the name of President James Monroe under whose administration it was begun. Fort Calhoun was begun (1830) on Willoughby Shoals but never completed. During the Civil War the name was changed to Fort Wool, but the local name has always been the "rip raps." Fishing off the "rip raps" is excellent.

